



Town of Bluffton
Request for Qualifications
Workforce Housing Developers
RFQ 2015-43

OVERVIEW AND OBJECTIVES

The Town of Bluffton (Town) is soliciting sealed qualifications from experienced and well qualified developers or development teams who have the capacity and expertise to develop workforce housing, which is defined as households earning 120% or less of the Area Median Income (AMI).

The Town is open to a variety of approaches including public-private partnerships consistent with state law that facilitate the development of workforce housing. The Town will interview selected firms that meet the identified criteria including demonstrated leadership working with other communities on similar projects. The Town expects a modest level of effort to be put into the response to this Request for Qualifications to help the Town understand why the developer is most qualified for the project.

This is an open Request for Qualifications and Sealed qualifications will be accepted on an ongoing basis. Offerors must include one (1) original, four (4) copies, and a digital copy on a USB Flash Drive/DVD/CD by the stated deadline.

Mailing Address: Town of Bluffton
 Attn: Kendra Lelie, AICP
 Assistant Director of Growth Management
 P.O. Box 386
 Bluffton, South Carolina 29910

Physical Address: Town of Bluffton
 Attn: Kendra Lelie, AICP
 Assistant Director of Growth Management
 20 Bridge Street
 Bluffton, South Carolina 29910

Questions must be submitted in writing to the contact noted below. Questions and answers, if any, will be posted on the Town's website at www.townofbluffton.sc.gov.

Contact: Kendra Lelie, AICP
Assistant Director of Growth Management
Email: klelie@townofbluffton.com
Fax: Attn: Kendra Lelie, (843) 706-4515
Mail: Town of Bluffton
Attn: Kendra Lelie
P.O. Box 386
Bluffton, South Carolina 29910

SCOPE OF SERVICES

The intent of this Request for Qualifications is to identify a development team comprised of planning, housing and development finance professionals interested in developing workforce housing. The Town envisions a four step process:

1. The Town will select the best qualified development team(s) that best represents the goals and objectives identified in the Neighborhood Assistance Program Strategies Plan.
2. Town Council and the Affordable Housing Committee will work with the selected development team(s) to define the specific community development objectives.
3. The Town and the selected developer(s) will mutually agree upon and create the public/private partnership to implement the development objectives.
4. Following a public involvement and scoping process, the development team(s) will obtain necessary approvals and will coordinate the construction of the project.

Ultimately, the Town intends to select a developer partner and/or partners who will be able to create a development plan/program that meets multiple community objectives including those identified in the Neighborhood Assistance Program Strategies Plan, and ensures the housing is built and operating within the shortest reasonable timeframe.

The Town shall consider financial and other subsidies, if necessary, to ensure a high quality development that meets the goals of the Town. Such subsidies may include but are not limited to cash, land, permit fee reductions/waivers, construction ready home plans, design assistance or other such subsidies agreed to by the Town. The Town would look to the selected developer(s) to:

1. Create a reasonable schedule and a mutually acceptable business plan;
2. Develop a housing program and product that addresses the Town's needs; and
3. Market and develop the project.

The proposal will be evaluated under criteria which include, but are not limited to, experience, financial capability, past project aesthetics, income targets, unit type and size, level of additional subsidy, schedule, quality of construction, energy efficiency and consistency with neighborhood character.

The Town would like to enter into a private-public partnership agreement with a developer and, as a function of that partnership, would require the developer to fully disclose costs and budgets associated with the project. The intent of this Request for Qualifications is to identify potential

partners that have the experience and qualifications to execute this project in a creative and economically sound manner, in accordance with the Neighborhood Assistance Program Strategies Plan and that are interested in partnering with the Town on this effort.

QUALIFICATIONS SUBMITTALS

Qualifications must contain the following, at a minimum:

- A cover letter including the RFQ subject, the legal name, address, email address, and telephone number of the Proposer. The letter should outline all partnerships and subcontractors that would be part of the project team along with the name and position of the person who will be the primary contact throughout the project. The cover letter should be signed by the person who has the authority to bind the proposing entity to the submitted proposal.
- Qualifications of proposed team members showing past experience in similar development projects and assurance that there are sufficient financial resources to complete the project in a timely manner.
- Project examples and descriptions for each member of the proposed development team including photos, videos, websites, architectural designs, etc.
- Description of a potential proposed project including a general vision for the project, identified constraints and opportunities, best approach for creating a successful project and a development timeline. The development project is not binding on a future proposal submittal. The purpose of the description is to demonstrate the respondent's initial ideas and programmatic response to the Town's affordable housing needs.
- References for similar work including the name and contact information for at least two (2) public officials in communities in which the team has worked on a project similar in nature.

All materials submitted shall become property of the Town of Bluffton.

LOCAL VENDOR PREFERENCE

The Town of Bluffton encourages local businesses to participate in this RFQ. For a firm to be eligible for Local Preference Certification, the company must have held a valid Town Business License for a consecutive period of at least two (2) years prior to application, and the company must maintain within Beaufort County a local office with a majority of its full-time employees, chief officers, and managers regularly conducting work at this location, properly licensed for commercial operations, open to the public, and in compliance with local zoning requirements.

EVALUATION CRITERIA

In reviewing the Statement of Qualifications, the Town will look for a development team(s) with demonstrated experience in, but not limited to, the following areas:

- Project Development and Financing – Successful public-private partnerships in development finance, as well as housing project completion, marketing and sales;
- Architecture – Residential designs that are appropriate to the character of the place, incorporate principles of resource efficiency and maximize value;
- Planning – Master planning of mixed use and neighborhood area plans that include creative site planning, public nodes and amenities, parks and trails connections. Ability to manage projects through the development review and entitlement process.
- Housing – Knowledge of current housing trends, challenges and opportunities with an emphasis on deed restricted housing development and programs.

TOWN OF BLUFFTON RIGHTS

Qualifications must be signed by an official of the company authorized to bind the offeror, and it shall contain a statement that the proposed price is good for a period of at least ninety (90) days from the submittal date.

The Town reserves the right to refuse any and all proposals and to waive any technicalities and informalities. The Town reserves the right to negotiate with any and all qualified offerors and may enact multiple contracts if it is deemed to be in the best interests of the Town. The Town may cancel this solicitation in part or in its entirety if it is in the Town's best interest to do so.

This solicitation does not commit the Town to award a contract, or to pay for any cost incurred in the preparation of your proposals, or to procure or contract for any articles of goods or services.

Any response is a public document under the South Carolina Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) and may be subject to disclosure, except as to information that may be treated as confidential as an exception to disclosure under the FOIA.

The Town does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age or disability in employment or in the provision of goods or services.

Attachments:

- 1) Neighborhood Assistance Program Strategies Plan
- 2) 2015 Area Median Income Table for Beaufort County